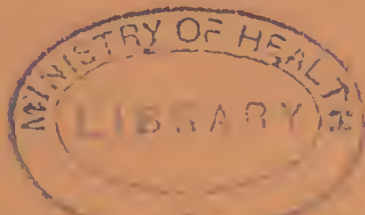


WELSH CHARTER  
F.  
27 MAY 1954  
A.

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL  
OF  
ABERYSTWYTH



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
ANNUAL REPORT

1953

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

I. Morgan Watkin, Ph.D. (Lond.), M.Sc., M.B.,  
B.Ch., D.P.H. (Wales).

SANITARY INSPECTOR

D. G. Bowen, A.R.S.I.

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To the Chairman and Members of the  
Aberystwyth Rural District Council.

It gives me pleasure to present to you the Annual Report of the Health Department for the year ended December 31st, 1953.

The number of deaths registered during the year was 160, three fewer than in the previous year and 51 fewer than in 1951. The principal cause of death was the same as in the past, viz. heart disease. It accounted for the death of 54 persons.

The number of registered live births was 146, one fewer than in 1952. Five infants under a twelve month died, but no mother died as a result of childbirth.

Few infectious diseases were notified. There was, however, a small outbreak of dysentery at Llanbadarn. As this disease is closely connected with a low standard of hygiene including sanitation, it is to be hoped that a proper scheme of sewage disposal in this area will not be delayed much longer. An outbreak of a disease known as Q fever - a disease apparently rather new to Great Britain - occurred in the Ponterwyd - Devil's Bridge - Ystumtuen areas. A more detailed account of this illness will be given later.

Visits of inspection were paid to small water schemes which were yielding unsatisfactory results and the source of contamination sought. The sites of proposed new schemes at Blaenplwyf and the site of the sewage disposal works at Ponterwyd were reported upon.

A number of houses were inspected and official representations were made to the Council where the condition of the premises was thought to warrant it. In this connection it might be mentioned that many properties which could in large cities be repaired at a reasonable cost



require the expenditure of a far larger sum for repair in Cardiganshire. This is unfortunate for the landlords are often unwilling or unable to spend the necessary money in making their properties fit for habitation. When this occurs the only legal alternative available to the Council is to have the property demolished. The principal cause of the high cost of repairs is the heavy transport cost of building materials. The following quotation for a 1,000 bricks by a midland firm may begin as an example:-  
Price of 1,000 bricks delivered in the midland town where they were manufactured £6. 0. 0. Price of 1,000 bricks delivered to the site in Cardiganshire £11. 5. 0.

Until such time as there will be an appreciable fall in transport charges building costs in Cardiganshire will remain considerably above those in many other parts of the country. It naturally follows that when building costs are high the rent payable for a house pursues a similar path. This in turn is one of the factors likely to promote rather than to hinder rural depopulation.

The Council will be glad to learn that, on the whole, the health of the inhabitants in its area continues to be good.

The Sanitary Inspector's Report is appended as a separate item.

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SUMMARY OF GENERAL AND VITAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres) .. .. 140,728

Population (Census 1931) . .. 11,132

Population (Mid-year 1952) .. .. 10,890

" ( " " 1953) .. .. 10,870

Rateable value at 1st April, 1953 £29,184

Sum represented by a penny rate (1952/53) £118

|  | <u>Total</u> | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> |
|--|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Number of registered live births (Leg.           | 139          | 70          | 69            |
| (Illeg.  | 8            | 3           | 5             |
| Number of registered still births (Leg.          | 3            | 2           | 1             |
| (Illeg.  | -            | -           | -             |
| Number of registered deaths.                     | 163          | 84          | 79            |
| Number of deaths of women ascribed to childbirth | -            | -           | -             |
| Number of deaths of infants under 1 year (Leg.   | 5            | 3           | 2             |
| (Illeg.  | -            | -           | -             |
| Number of deaths of infants under 1 month (Leg.  | 3            | 2           | 1             |
| (Illeg.  | -            | -           | -             |

Areal comparability factor for births = 1.14

Areal comparability factor for deaths = 0.69

|   | <u>Aberystwyth</u><br><u>R.D.C.</u> | <u>England</u><br><u>and Wales</u> |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Crude live birth rate per 1,000 estimated<br>mid-year population .. ..    | 13.5                                | 15.5                               |
| Adjusted live birth rate per 1,000 estimated<br>mid-year population .. .. | 15.4                                | -                                  |
| Crude death rate per 1,000 estimated<br>mid-year population .. ..         | 14.7                                | 11.4                               |
| Adjusted death rate per 1,000 estimated<br>mid-year population .. ..      | 10.1                                | -                                  |



General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

In addition to the general medical services provided by registered medical practitioners the following ancillary services are provided by the local health authority:-

- (a) An ante-natal and post-natal clinic is held fortnightly at Aberystwyth. In those areas not readily accessible from Aberystwyth, expectant and nursing mothers receive medical advice from their own doctors.
- (b) Infant welfare clinics are held fortnightly at the following centres: Taliesin, Borth and Llanbadarn and weekly at Aberystwyth.
- (c) The domiciliary midwifery service is carried out by the district nurse who is also a state registered nurse.
- (d) One health visitor covers the northern half of the district and another the southern half.
- (e) Home nursing is in the hands of the district nurse.
- (f) Vaccination is carried out by the person's own medical attendant but immunisation against diphtheria is performed partly by the former and partly by medical officers of the local health authority.
- (g) No ambulance is stationed in the Rural District. The headquarters of the ambulance service are situated in Aberystwyth from which four ambulances operate.
- (h) Arrangements for the prevention of illness consist in periodic talks and advice given by the staff of the local health authority.

Care and after care is in the hands of the health visitor and the district nurse. Tuberculosis cases are also followed up by the Chest Physician's health visitor.

- (i) Domestic help is provided by suitable persons engaged locally.



| <u>Registrar General's</u><br><u>Code Number</u> | <u>Causes of Death, 1953.</u>          | <u>Number of deaths</u> |               |              |
|--|--|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|  |  | <u>Male</u>             | <u>Female</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| 1  | Tuberculosis, respiratory              | 3                       | 1             | 4            |
| 2  | Tuberculosis, other                    | -                       | 1             | 1            |
| 9  | Other infective and parasitic diseases | -                       | 1             | 1            |
| 10   | Malignant neoplasm, stomach            | 6                       | 2             | 8            |
| 11   | Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus     | 1                       | -             | 1            |
| 12   | Malignant neoplasm, breast             | -                       | 1             | 1            |
| 13   | Malignant neoplasm, uterus             | -                       | -             | -            |
| 14   | Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms  | 8                       | 7             | 15           |
| 17   | Vascular lesions of nervous system     | 2                       | 13            | 15           |
| 18   | Coronary disease, angina               | 11                      | 6             | 17           |
| 19   | Hypertension with heart disease        | -                       | 3             | 3            |
| 20   | Other heart disease                    | 14                      | 23            | 37           |
| 21   | Other circulatory disease              | 2                       | 4             | 6            |
| 23   | Pneumonia                              | -                       | 4             | 4            |
| 24   | Bronchitis                             | 3                       | 3             | 6            |
| 25   | Other diseases of respiratory system   | -                       | 1             | 1            |
| 26   | Ulcer of stomach and duodenum          | 1                       | 1             | 2            |
| 28   | Nephritis and nephrosis                | -                       | 2             | 2            |
| 29   | Hyperplasia of prostate                | 3                       | -             | 3            |
| 31   | Congenital malformations               | 1                       | 1             | 2            |
| 32   | Other defined and ill-defined diseases | 13                      | 14            | 27           |
| 33   | Motor vehicle accidents                | 3                       | -             | 3            |
| 34   | All other accidents                    | 1                       | -             | 1            |
| Total  |  | 72                      | 88            | 160          |



INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following is a list of the notifications of infectious disease, other than tuberculosis, received during the year.

|  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Cholera  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Diphtheria                                     | .   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Dysentery (amoebic and bacillary)              | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3   |
| Encephalitis                                   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Erysipelas                                     | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Food poisoning                                 | ..  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Malaria  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Measles  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1   |
| Meningococcal meningitis                       | ..  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Ophthalmia neonatorum                          | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Paratyphoid fever                              | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Plague   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Pneumonia (acute primary and acute influenzal) | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Poliomyelitis                                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Puerperal pyrexia                              | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Relapsing fever                                | .   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Scarlet fever                                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4   |
| Smallpox                                       | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Typhoid fever                                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Typhus fever                                   | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| Whooping cough                                 | ..  | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5   |



# TUBERCULOSIS

During the year eight new cases of tuberculosis were notified to the Department. The details are as follows:-

## AGES

|               | 0-4 |   | 5-9 |   | 10-14 |   | 15-19 |   | 20-24 |   | 25-29 |   | 30-34 |   | 35-39 |   | 40-44 |   | 45-49 |   | 50-54 |   | 55-59 |   | 60 + |   |
|---------------|-----|---|-----|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|------|---|
|               | M   | F | M   | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M     | F | M    | F |
| Pulmonary     | -   | - | -   | 1 | -     | 1 | -     | - | 1     | - | -     | 1 | 1     | - | -     | - | 1     | 1 | -     | 1 | -     | - | -     | - | -    | - |
| Non-Pulmonary | -   | - | -   | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -     | - | -    | - |

## Q FEVER

During the latter part of May and the early part of June, 1953, fifteen confirmed cases of Q fever occurred in a small area from Ponterwyd to Ystumtuen and across to Devil's Bridge. The symptoms were similar to those of an atypical pneumonia. All the patients recovered.

Q fever was first discovered among slaughterhouse workers in Queensland in 1937. Outbreaks occurred among Allied and Axis forces in 1944 in Italy and Greece. The first outbreak in Britain occurred in a London hospital in 1939 when two doctors, a nurse, and a mortuary attendant contracted the disease after carrying out a post-mortem examination of a man who had died of Q fever. In 1951 twenty eight staff and students from a school in Canterbury contracted Q fever. The infection was believed to have been acquired when they opened a packing case containing contaminated straw. The outbreak in Cardiganshire is the first known to have occurred in Wales.

The disease is caused by an organism of the Rickettsia family - a family which is responsible for numerous diseases of varying severity, the most serious being typhus. Infection may be acquired by a tick bite, by drinking infected milk or by inhaling the organism from infected dust. The outbreak in the Ponterwyd area was almost certainly acquired by inhaling infected dust.

The mode of infection is of interest, especially to farmers: sheep which are silent carriers disseminate the organism via the placenta after lambing. If weather conditions are dry, as they were at the material time



last year, the Rickettsia are scattered upon the surface of the earth and become blown by dust. This, in turn, is inhaled by man and, after an incubation period of some weeks, he may display signs of the disease.

Much research has yet to be carried out on Q fever, one of the principal problems being the manner in which sheep are infected in the first instance.

N.P.

Specialists from the Q fever research laboratory at Cambridge were called in and stayed for some time in the affected area. The Veterinary Investigation Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries at Aberystwyth took an active part in investigating the outbreak on the animal side. The results of all the investigations will be published in a technical journal at a future date.

From the evidence so far collected it seems unlikely that we have heard the last of Q fever on the moorlands of Cardiganshire.

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NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

SECTION 47.

No compulsory action was required to be taken during the year under the above section which deals with persons unable to devote to themselves and are not receiving from other persons proper care and attention.

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GENERAL

The committees of the Aberystwyth Rural District Council concerned with public health matters are: a) Finance, Health and Housing Committee.  
b) Water and Sewerage Committee.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE  
YEAR ENDING 31st. DECEMBER, 1953.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938:

Six further premises used for the sale of ice cream were added to the register kept under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

None of the premises registered were used for the manufacture of ice cream, but for the sale of the commodity only. All ice cream is brought into the rural area by wholesale firms for retail sale in the shops. A large proportion is pre-packed which reduces the risk of contamination by handling.

FOODS:

The cafes and kitchens of the restaurants in Borth and Clarach were inspected at the height of the summer season and were found to be on the whole satisfactory.

Disposal of sullage water from these premises into cesspools caused a nuisance at times. Every effort was made to assist the cafe owners by cleansing these cesspools when they had become full.

No complaints were received from the public frequenting the cafes during the year.

The Council adopted Byelaws relating to the Handling and Sale of Food both in shops and in the open air and they were in force in the Council's area towards the latter part of the year. These Byelaws will give added power to the Council to prosecute any offenders against clean food handling methods. Copies of the Byelaws were distributed to shopkeepers and food handlers in the area.

1. The estimated number of food premises by type of business in the area is as follows:-

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Grocers and Confectioners | 32 |
| Bakers                    | 5  |
| Fishmongers               | 1  |
| Fruiterers                | 3  |
| Butchers                  | 12 |
| Fish Fryers               | 2  |

2. The following premises are registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938:-

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Ice Cream (for sale only) | 41 |
| Ice Cream Manufacture     | 2  |
| Fish Fryers               | 2  |



3. Sixty inspections of food premises were carried out during the year. The standard of cleanliness was good on the whole and no complaints were received of dirty premises.
4. There are no established educational activities as far as I am aware in the area in the form of clean food guilds or lectures on food hygiene and no new educational activity was commenced.
5. Condemned food is disposed of by burial in the Council's refuse tips at Borth and Llanbadarn and sometimes by supervised burial in ground belonging to the owner of the food. There is no incinerator available in the area which could be used for disposing of food of this kind.
6. No special examination of a stock or a large consignment of food was found necessary during the year.

#### FACTORIES ACT, 1937:

The number of factories in the register kept under the Act is now 49. Visits of inspection were made to these premises.

The number of bakehouses in the area remains at five. There are two in Borth; one in Llanrhystyd; one in Llangawsai; and one in Talybont. Minor breaches of cleanliness occurred in the bakehouses but these were rectified by the service of notices on the owners. Lime washing was carried out at six monthly intervals in accordance with the Act. A new sink was installed at one of the bakehouses.

#### MILK AND DAIRIES:

Control of milk production remained in the hands of the Ministry of Agriculture. There is only one milk distributor as defined in the Milk and Dairies Regulations and he is registered by the Council.

Five dealers' licences to sell Tuberculin Tested and Pasteurized Milks were renewed during the year. Samples of designated milks were taken and submitted for testing by Methylene Blue.

#### HOUSING:

Progress was made in the Council's programme of building houses and flats. The erection of houses and flats was commenced at Capel Bangor. The following houses and flats were completed during the year, viz.,

- 28 Gregory Flats at Commins Coch;
- 16 Gregory Flats at Llanbadarn;
- 16 Gregory Flats at Borth;
- 8 houses at Llanbadarn;
- 8 houses at Llanrhystyd;
- 4 houses at Clarach;
- 10 houses at Bow Street;
- 8 houses at Blaenplwyf.



The clearance of unfit houses also proceeded and four houses were demolished in Bow Street, in accordance with procedure under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936.

One house was closed in pursuance of an undertaking given by the owner under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, and this is still in force.

A number of owners of houses qualified for and received grants under the Housing Act, 1949, to improve their properties.

Notices were served on owners of houses to carry out urgent repairs on complaints from tenants. Eight houses were rendered fit as a result of this procedure.

Notices were served on two house owners under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, and demolition orders were made by the Council on the houses concerned, viz., Elmore, Bow Street and Eagle House, Bow Street.

A good number of new Council houses were let to applicants on the housing list during the year. The list still remains formidable but progress has been made in alleviating the unsatisfactory housing conditions of some of the people in the rural area.

#### REFUSE DISPOSAL:

House refuse was collected every week or every fortnight in most of the villages in the Council's area. Disposal continues to be by controlled tipping at Borth and Llanbadarn.

Refuse collection at Llanrhystyd was not up to standard, the collections being irregular and infrequent and the disposal by indiscriminate dumping being unsatisfactory. As a result the contractor was changed and a new contractor was appointed. This will ensure that all refuse will be cleared regularly at fortnightly intervals and disposal will be by controlled tipping at Borth.

The existing dump at Llanrhystyd should be sealed off with soil. The controlled tips were periodically treated for rodent control with satisfactory results.

#### DITCHES AND WATERCOURSES:

The Council are responsible for the cleaning of the following ditches and water-courses into which sullage water and in some cases sewage discharges:-

Llanbadarn Fullbrook;  
Dolhalog Ditch;  
Quebec Ditch;  
Doldau Ditch;  
Borth Leet;  
Brynrodyn Ditches to Aberwennol;  
Llangawsai Ditch;  
Goginan Sewer Outfall Ditch.



### DITCHES AND WATERCOURSES (Continued)

An additional water course was taken over by the Council during the year by resolution of the Council. This is the watercourse at Waunfawr. The work entailed is small and will add very little to the Council's burden.

### NUISANCES:

A register of complaints was kept and 212 complaints were entered in the register during the year.

All complaints were investigated and pursued to a satisfactory conclusion. Most of the nuisances were abated by service of preliminary notices under the Public Health Act, 1936.

### DISINFESTATION:

The standard of cleanliness was maintained at a high level during the year and no action was required to disinfest any person or property infested with vermin.

### CAMPING SITES:

Camping sites at Clarach and Borth were regularly inspected during the summer season. It was difficult to obtain a satisfactory standard of hygiene all the time, and in Borth in particular it was found necessary to exercise close supervision.

Disposal of sewage and sullage water and refuse collection remain the main causes of complaints in the camps, which become accentuated during the busy month of August. No infectious diseases were notified from the camps during the year.

### RODENT CONTROL:

Complaints of infestations of rats were few and were all dealt with using Warfarin poison.

Borth Tip and Llanbadarn Tip were the only major infestations in the area apart from farms. The tips were treated by the Council and the farms by the Cardigan Agricultural Executive Committee Pests Officer.

One notice was served under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. This was sent to a farmer who refused entry to the Pests Officer to carry out a treatment for the destruction of rats on his farm. The farmer complied with the demands of the notice and the Pests Officer was able to carry out a treatment.



WATER SUPPLIES:

The village schemes were maintained in working order by the Council's Surveyor.

Sampling of water supplies was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and every effort was made to sample all village supplies at least once monthly.

Weekly samples of the Northern Division Supply were taken and submitted for bacteriological analysis.

All supplies, both from local sources and from the Northern Division Supply were of a consistently good standard.

The consent of the Council was given in twenty cases where application was made to use grant aided water supplies on farms for domestic purposes. In every case the results of at least three samples were scrutinized before consent was given. Some of the supplies were unsuitable and consent was withheld.

Private supplies were also sampled and advisory work done on receipt of the results of the samples.

During the year 76 samples were taken for bacteriological analysis.

Approval by the Ministry to the Southern Division Water Scheme was forthcoming during the year and the starting date for the scheme was given for January 1st, 1954. This scheme when completed will supply practically all the villages in the Council's Southern Division.

Contracts were let for extensions to the filter house and the first phase of the scheme comprising of 11 miles of main from Penrhyncoch to Llanilar, including the Capel Seion and New Cross areas - which are now in short supply. Survey work for the second phase was completed comprising 41 miles of main.

The following extensions to the Northern Division Supply were completed during the year, viz.,

Clarach Beach to Alltglaise area.  
Ynyslas - Trerddol Link Main.  
Talybont Square to Barynys.

The water supply mains in Ponterwyd village were re-laid



### FOODS:

A variety of tinned foods was surrendered by shop-keepers and condemned as unfit for human consumption. The principal causes for condemnation were blown and rusty tins and decomposition.

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

Infectious diseases notified were few and disinfection of rooms and fomites was carried out in cases of scarlet fever and tuberculosis. Where patients were discharged from sanatoria suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, investigations were made at the homes to ascertain that the necessary precautions were being taken to prevent the spread of infection. Reports were submitted to the County Medical Officer of Health in each case.

### SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEMES:

Progress was made towards completion of the sewerage schemes in the village of Llanfarian, Llanrhystyd and Bow Street.

No decision was reached by the Ministry regarding the sewerage scheme for Llanbadarnfawr which has reached the public inquiry stage.

The Council contracted on an actual cost basis for the cleansing of cesspools on application by owners of properties. Forty six cesspools were cleansed during the year.

There is a drainage system in Llangawsei and Llanbadarn and Pwllhobi which has outfalls in Dolhalog Ditch, Quebec Ditch and Llangawsei Ditch. This is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs and can only be remedied by a sewerage scheme for the area.

### BUILDING LICENSING:

The work of Building Licensing Officer was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and licences for repairs and improvements to houses were issued, as well as licences for the erection of new houses in the Council's area.

The licensing position eased during the year with the increase in the 'free limit' for repairs, and the automatic granting of licences for the erection of new houses of not more than 1,000 square feet in area. Licences were issued for the erection of 13 new private dwellings during the year.



SLAUGHTERING OF ANIMALS:

The slaughtering of animals for human consumption is centralised in the town of Aberystwyth.

Tentative inquiries from rural butchers as to the possible re-opening of their private slaughter-houses on the de-control of meat during 1954, were dealt with and one prospective slaughter-house was inspected with a view to its being adapted for future slaughtering.

There is one Knacker's Yard in the area which is licensed by the Council under Section 57 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. These premises were inspected and the licence was renewed for the year 1953.

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SANITARY OFFICERS (OUTSIDE LONDON) REGULATIONS, 1935.

Article 27 Section 18.

(a) Number of Inspections .....340

Nature of Inspections:-

Investigations of complaints of Nuisances.

Housing Inspection.

Rodent Control Inspections.

Food Inspections.

Sampling of Water Supplies.

(b) Number of Notices Served: Statutory.....1  
Other Notices..... 166

(c) Result of Service of Notices.....Nuisances abated.....139  
Houses made fit..... 8

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Article 17 Section 4.

(a) Number of Dwellings overcrowded..... 4  
Number of Families..... 5  
Number of Persons dwelling therein..... 27

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding..... NIL

(c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved..... 1  
Number of persons concerned..... 4

(d) NONE.

(e) NONE.

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D. G. BOWEN, A.R.S.I.,  
SANITARY INSPECTOR.

March, 1954.

